



Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario

Inside

MGOI

Welcome to the May edition of *Inside MGOI*, the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc. (MGOI) newsletter.

The Newsletter focuses on you, Master Gardeners! This is your venue for providing updates, insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members, Directors, and the 29 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario. The Newsletter features member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, upcoming events such as regional technical updates – anything about the functioning and happenings of our groups and our members. Please feel free to submit pictures – they are most welcome!

Contributions to future editions of *Inside MGOI* may be sent at any time to the Newsletter Editor, Isabel Belanger, newsletter@mgoi.ca.

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INSIDE MGOI

**Newsletter of the
Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.**

May 2021

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

Grey County Master Gardeners

In Memoriam

Margaret McDonald



Margaret McDonald, Grey County Master Gardener Emerita and one of our founding members, passed away on May 2nd at the age of 89. Margaret was born and raised in Chesley, a small town in Bruce County. She and her

husband Jack farmed the McDonald family farm until his final illness and death in 1982.

Margaret was incredibly creative. A skilled seamstress, she ran her own business "Wild Rose Creations" for over 20 years, winding it down in the early 1990s. She was well known in the area for her beautiful quilts, and was our expert on flower arranging. Margaret was also known to pick up a brush or two and try her hand at painting.

Margaret was also committed to making her community a better place. She was a 4-H leader, a dedicated Big Sister, and an active member of the Chesley Horticultural Society. Not only was she one of the group of dedicated gardeners from Bruce, Grey and Huron counties who established the Tri-County Master Gardeners, later Grey County Master Gardeners, but she was also a founding member of Gillies Hill Women's Institute.

Margaret developed a taste for travel after Jack died and enjoyed escaping south to warmer temperatures. Probably her favourite excursion was her annual trip to Las Vegas with her daughter Peggy. Yes, our Margaret liked the casinos!

Unfortunately difficulty and loss were also a part of Margaret's life. Widowed at 51, she was predeceased by two of her four children. In her later years she experienced

serious mobility issues; however, Margaret was not about to be defeated by these limitations and was a familiar sight speeding around Chesley on her motor scooter.

We will honour Margaret with a memorial tree and a donation of a gardening book to the Chesley Public Library.

The picture below captures Margaret's enjoyment of socializing. Here she is, front and centre, at a lunch reunion in September 2019 with old friends from Grey County Master Gardeners.



(Back row, l to r): Ursula Karalus, Diana Lenk, Verna Beckenhauer, Paul Statia, all GCMGs Emeriti & Founding Members, & Pat Draves Wyszynski, former MG; (front, l to r): Sue Connelly, former MG, Margaret McDonald, Jackie Campbell, MG



Stratford Master Gardeners

New Master Gardeners in Training

John Hindley

Jennie Girard

John is a recently retired English teacher with 30 years gardening experience. He is a singer and president of a church gardening group.

Jennie is a recently retired teacher with over 50 years gardening experience. She graduated from a 3-year Landscape Design program at Fanshawe College and spent 7 summers as a landscaper.



Toronto Master Gardeners

Master Gardener Status Achieved by the Class of 2019

1. Desré Kramer
2. Cynthia Levine-Rasky
3. Karen Martin
4. Kathy Martin
5. Gail Pahwa
6. Morty Shapiro
7. Frankie Wright

May 18, 2021

by Virginia Barton, TMG

The Toronto Master Gardeners are now seven (7) members stronger with the graduating class of 2019 now achieving Master Gardener status. All seven (7) members achieved Master Gardener status within two years. This new group of MGs brings a wealth of competencies and background skills that will strengthen and enrich our Toronto chapter. We are thrilled to have them as new Master Gardeners. Congratulations!

At the virtual graduating event, Toronto Master Gardeners were privileged to have writer Lorraine Johnson give a timely presentation of “Unsettling the Garden: A Non-indigenous Gardener’s Reflection on Landscape, Reconciliation and Relationship-Building”. In this defining talk, Lorraine explored the garden in the context of reconciliation and land sovereignty, looking at the ways gardening traditions are tied to settler-colonialism, and the role of native plants and restorative land care in restitution and relationship-building: A thought-provoking introduction for our seven (7) newest members of the Toronto Master Gardeners.



Niagara Master Gardeners

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Kendy Steeves

Kendy joined our group in 2018.

She took her courses from Dalhousie where she also took other courses.

Kendy has been a willing volunteer

at our plant sales, hotline and library duties. She also spearheaded the programme that our group does for a hospice in St. Catharines. Until the pandemic, a small group would do seasonally appropriate arrangements with the clients. One only had to attend to see how phenomenal the entire experience was. Our group is indeed fortunate to have Kendy in our group.



Lois Johnson



Lois came to us in the spring of 2019. She lectures at Niagara College. Lois did her courses at Guelph. Again, we were fortunate to gain such a willing volunteer at our plant sales, the hotline and library duties. Lois worked long hours to

spearhead the Food Committee for our Niagara North Seedy Saturday. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 in 2020, this event was cancelled. Again, our group is indeed fortunate to have Lois with us.



YouTube Slideshows

In case you missed it last month, MGOI would like to invite Master Gardeners to forward 1 or 2 pictures of your garden as it evolves through the seasons for the 2021 MGOI YouTube Slideshows.

This year we would like to suggest you pay special attention to more unusual plants, native plants and pollinator magnets.

Please send your photo(s) to Kelly Noel at noeltoo@outlook.com and put in the subject line:

Your name, group, a caption and date – all in one line in the email – to make it quick and easy for Kelly to copy and paste on the slide. Example:
Flora Green Ottawa Hepatica americana leaves after it finishes flowering May 10



Note: iPads / iPhones sometimes automatically downsize an image before sending. Try to avoid that – the photo gets blurry when it's increased back to slide-size.

We will send a link to the slideshow each month from May to October with *Inside MGOI*.

Thank you for participating.

*Adrienne Hanbidge,
MGOI Director of Communications*

Master Gardener Group Websites / Links

A Message from Jim Cook, MGOI Webmaster

The MGOI website lists current links to group websites and social media, such as Facebook and Instagram:

<https://www.mgoi.ca/groups/groups.html>.

This is a reminder to please inform myself, Jim Cook, MGOI webmaster of any changes to your links to keep them up-to-date. My address is:

webmaster@mgoi.ca.

Thanks!



<https://smejoinup.com/5-google-webmaster-tools-alternatives/>



Master Gardeners Out & About Projects & Events

Prince Edward County Master Gardeners

Name: Thank You Note from
PE County Fitness and Aquatic
Centre



Details: Good Morning Members, Spring has sprung and everywhere we are seeing new signs of brightness and growth! Thanks to Prince Edward County MGs Aleksa, Colette, Rosie, Barb, Margo, Ren, Cathy and Gail we **have a**

lovely new installation of Daffodils! We get to enjoy their hard work from last fall and encourage you to drive by and take a look.



The PEC MG Team



Spring Daffodils Looking Fabulous



Planting Daffs

Name: Wellington Farmer's Market Plant Sale, May 22, 2021

by Ren Duinker

Details: All of us have had to reinvent ourselves and the way we do our work in the communities we serve. The restrictions of the pandemic have forced most of us to cancel our plant sales this year, taking away a vital source of funding. In Prince Edward County, we are very lucky to have a supportive, energetic group. One of our members, Susan Warrack, contacted the Wellington Farmer's Market and snagged us a table for three weekends. So,



we regrouped, got busy potting up plants and headed to Wellington. We always have a lot of fun at these events, not just meeting people and hearing about their gardens, but we have fun together. MGs who weren't even on the roster to work that day showed up to help. Andie Wiens and Susan Warrack picked up local roses and spelled us off for a break. Thanks Susan and Andie. Sarah McParland and Katie Middleton brought huge, gorgeous plants from their gardens for the sale – thanks Sarah and Katie. June Crocco came to the market to say hello and show her support. Thanks for dropping by June!





Margot Rivers, Susan Warrack, Andie Wiens

We also have a new banner thanks to MG Gail Walker who designed it. Thanks Gail, it looks great!

If today was any indicator, we will possibly make enough money at the three markets to make up for not having our single annual plant sale. Thanks also go to Cathy Thompson for storing all the plants, trees and roses – and for running our booth on May 29.

Finally, a huge thanks to my trusty sidekick, Margot Rivers for running the booth with me today and offering her friendly garden advice as always.



Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Name: Partnership with the Ottawa Public Library

Details: MGOC were invited by the library to give Zoom talks on gardening in April and May, and are continuing the series throughout June. Several members stepped up to provide talks, some in English and some in French. Check out topics and register for any of the remaining sessions via the OPL website [here](#).



Stratford and Area Master Gardeners

Name: Understories: The Layers of Life with Leslye Glover

Details: On May 19, 2021 Leslye captured the audience's interest with her talk about plant communities in a large variety of understories. She explained that understory uses are many and varied including recycling organic matter, facilitating growth for all species, retaining moisture, keeping forest litter from blowing away, providing protection from wind, rain, sun and predators, and inhibiting erosion. She talked about life in the soil and encouraged everyone to think like a microbe. Allowing plant matter to decompose is important. Connections between all living things are crucial because they are all part of the tapestry of life and one thread disappearing can have a negative impact on the co-dependency of all plant and animal species.

References included the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, <https://cvc.ca/>, and their resource [Native Plants for Pollinators](#); and [Creating Living Landscapes to Restore Nature's Relationships](#) with Doug Tallamy.



Halton Master Gardeners

Name: Church Garden Volunteer

Details: Connie Booth, MGIT, has been doing volunteer work in her church's gardens since early summer of 2020. MG David Marshall, Connie's Mentor, has been advising Connie and the church's gardener (Peter Coffey) regarding reorganizing and rejuvenating the gardens.



Pictured from left to right are David Marshall, Connie Booth and Peter Coffey



On Monday, May 3rd, David generously donated 83 perennial plants and shrubs for use in Connie's church gardens. This was greatly appreciated by all concerned!

David is the longest serving member in HMGs and will earn his 30 year volunteer badge this year. Imagine all the knowledge that he has acquired and shared in those years! David wrote an excellent seed starting series in the HMG 2019 newsletter and [blog post](#). In a 2011 interview, David stated that his worst gardening mistake was "moving plants around without being absolutely sure that there was no mint or lily of the valley hiding in the clump!" We are so lucky to have such wonderful members in our group.

Name: Halton Master Gardeners Site Consultations

by MG Claudette Sims & MGITs Pam MacDonald & Bev Wagar

Details: Halton MGs have been doing site consultations for homeowners for a few years now. We were delighted to receive a request from a public library recently. They were seeking a designation as a [Hamilton Pollinator Paradise](#) and wanted ideas about plants for raised planters and possibly some other garden areas.

Our newly created and appointed "Coordinator of Public Requests" MGIT Pam MacDonald takes these requests from the public and finds MGs in our group to fill them. These visits allow us to continue supporting the gardening public, even during the pandemic. Her email was quickly answered by myself and MGIT Bev Wagar. We agreed to meet, socially distanced and masked, outside the library. This was the first time the three of us had worked together. I brought my garden gloves and a trowel to check the soil composition. Pam brought a measuring tape and had the whole area measured before I arrived. Bev brought a backpack loaded with books and an extra-long measuring tape. What a great team!

Our librarians had, not surprisingly, done some homework. Looking at their list of possible plants I was thrilled to see that they were all native – perfect for a pollinator garden. We went through the list and discussed plants that might work. Some like blue lobelia and cardinal flower needed more moist conditions. We thought others like wild bergamot, pearly everlasting (American lady caterpillar host), butterfly milkweed (monarch host), grey-headed coneflower, golden alexanders (black swallowtail host) and anise hyssop would work well.

Asters, goldenrods and native sunflowers were also suggested because of their importance as "keystone plants". Dill and parsley, also host plants for black Sswallowtail caterpillars, could be added to share with the community. What a great learning opportunity for local children to watch the green caterpillars grow!



We suggested some grasses to bring the design together: Little bluestem, switchgrass and tufted hair gGrass. We had to consider the soil (loose but shallow as the planters are built on the sidewalk), light conditions (the area faces south), viewing (what would the planter look like from inside the library), and watering (everything needs to be hand watered from a tap inside the library). The librarians would be in charge of the maintenance.

Pam followed up with detailed notes from our meeting and researched salt tolerant plants that might be planted in other areas adjacent to sidewalks. As a new MGIT, this gave her a perfect opportunity to extend her knowledge. I offered some tufted hair grass and Liatris seedlings left over from last year's winter sowing. The librarians gratefully accepted this additional support.



How do librarians move plants? A library cart of course! This one was filled with pearly everlasting, butterfly weed, Joe Pye weed, plus a gift to the community of 3 cherry tomato plants!





Claudette, left, with librarians Emily & Melissa and donated plants.

Photo by Pam MacDonald

What did our librarian friends have to say about the visit?

"We learned so much "were blown away" "and excited to get gardening in the next couple of weeks".

What did the new MGiT (Pam) have to say about the visit?

"Watching and listening to an MG in action is a great way to learn the ropes, and I was able to contribute by being the note taker and doing some research on a question raised by the clients – a great experience!"

What did MGiT Bev have to say?

"I was encouraged by the librarians' diligence championing this project. I hope they document the process and promote library gardens in their own professional networks. I'd love to see more of these projects happening next year."

What does Claudette have to say?

"Supporting this library move towards more ecologically productive plantings may encourage other public and commercial properties to make this important and necessary change. We hope these plantings also inspire local homeowners to see the beauty and life that native plants bring to a garden".

There were currently 2 raised planters with uninspired plantings of daylilies and some kind of grass which we suspect might have been Canada rye. The librarians proposed a third raised planter tucked against the wall to the right.



The sloped walkway leads to a row of non-native Karl Foerster grass (on the left) planted along the sidewalk. A list of salt tolerant plants was provided for this area.



Name: Lunch and Learn Webinar Series: 'A Fresh Look at Gardening'

Details: Every

Friday from

April 16th until

May 21st

Halton MGs

presented a

series of

seminars as

part of their *A Fresh Look at Gardening Workshop* series, via Zoom.



This was a first for us and proved to be a great learning experience – lots of work, but lots of fun. The series was geared to new gardeners and there was a strong focus on right plant, right place and designing with native plants for every garden.



The following are the topics we covered in the series:

1. **A Fresh Look at Gardening** with Cathy Kavassalis
Plant choices for your garden avoiding invasive plants, no matter how pretty, and discovering why native plants are important additions for every yard.
2. **Re-imagining the Home Landscape** with Janet Mackey
How to transition your landscape to one that is more sustainable.
3. **Starting from Scratch – New Gardens, Big or Small** with Elisa Bernier and Isabel Belanger
Key steps on the path to garden success.
4. **Garden Facelift – Do the Renew!** with Claudette Sims and Allyn Walsh
Bringing new life to a tired or overgrown garden using the examples of two real-life gardens.
5. **Beneficial Insects – Managing Pests in an Eco-friendly Way** with Hariette Henry
The predator/prey cycle that exists in our gardens and harnessing that relationship to keep our garden plants thriving.
6. **Your Nature-Friendly Garden Throughout the Year** with Kate Sault and Bev Wagar
A season-by-season look at how and why to do things differently – the new maintenance.

Lessons Learned

Organizing a series of workshops like these requires a lot of planning and organizing. The team met weekly to decide everything from topics, the order of workshops, dates and time, and how to roll out the workshops. Copious notes were taken and shared on Google Drive – an extremely valuable resource with easy access for everyone presenting the workshops. We needed to advertise the event which was accomplished through the HMG Newsletter.

Also needed is a certain amount of technical expertise with Zoom and Eventbrite. Thank you Bev for organizing Eventbrite.

And thank you ‘hosts’ – the two people who introduced speakers, taped each session and managed the Q & A Chat for each session. We did have one glitch when people were ‘kicked out’ of one session – but they were quickly let back in.

How It Turned Out

All in all our very first Lunch & Learn Webinar Series was a great success. Almost all the 6 workshops were sold out – we ended up adding more seats to sessions. Thank you to everyone who signed up and stay tuned for our next project.



Upcoming Events

Master Gardeners of Ottawa – Carleton

Name: Trowel Talk Live – Learn over Lunch

Dates: Every Tuesday until November 2, 2021



Learn over Lunch with
Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton
Tuesdays at 12:30pm, April 6 to November 2
Live on Zoom

Each session will include a presentation on the topic of the week followed by Q&A - 25-30 minutes total.

Registrants will receive a confirmation email with the Zoom link and a weekly email reminder with upcoming topics.

Click [here](#) to register for these meetings – attend as many as you can!

Etobicoke Master Gardeners

Name: EMG/Humber Arboretum Virtual Gardening Workshops – 2021

Dates & Topics: Further Workshops include:

Jun. 12 – Benefits of Gardening

Oct. 16 – Pruning

Nov. 13 – Pests & Pathogens



Register at: <https://humber.ca/arboretum/events>

Master Gardeners of Ottawa – Carleton

Name: Lecture Series

Details: THE FRIENDS OF THE FARM PRESENTS LECTURES BY MASTER GARDENERS OF OTTAWA-CARLETON



Please join us from 7pm to 8pm **VIA ZOOM**.

MGOC presented 3 lectures in April and May : “Our Gardens and Climate Change”, “Colour through the Seasons”, and “Into the Night Garden”. The series resumes in September.

Tuesday September 21: “Another Gardening Year Behind Us”

Come fall, there is still lots to do in your garden. Planting, planning, cutting, trimming, composting ... tasks to enjoy as you wrap up all things gardening for another rewarding season.

Tuesday September 28: “A Garden for the Birds”

Wild birds are currently facing a multitude of threats across North America. Many bird species are in decline. This talk will review the most common threats and provide gardeners with some practical, positive ways to encourage birds to visit your garden. Make your garden more bird-friendly year-round.

Cost: \$10 if not a member of Friends of the Farm

TO REGISTER AND OBTAIN MORE DETAILS:

<https://friendsofthefarm.ca/fcef-annual-events/master-gardener-lectures>

Name: 2021 Atlantic Master Gardeners Association (AMGA)

Webinar Series: Spring, Summer, & Fall via Zoom

Summer: The Designer’s Way: Seven Spatial Archetypes for Landscape Design

Date & Time: Sunday, July 11, 2021 at 2:00 pm ADT



Cost: \$20 for non-AMGA members via e-transfer. Register here:

https://www.atlanticmastergardeners.ca/fallwebinar?utm_campaign=c49ae866-0a2e-4aba-8cdf-28c3982dd2b7&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail

Details: The AMGA Conference was cancelled in 2020. The Keynote speaker was to have been Julie Moir Messervy, award winning landscape designer from Vermont and author of *New Landscaping Ideas that Work* and other books.



Using the landscape archetypes of the sea, the cave, the promontory, the harbour, the island, the mountain and the sky, this lecture will show you how to add form, structure, and interest to your garden planning. Given that the Atlantic Provinces have a great variety of these landforms, Julie will provide ideas that you can incorporate into your garden design.

Registration: Opens 21 May, 2021 for non-members and costs \$20 for non-AMGA members via e-transfer. Register here:

https://www.atlanticmastergardeners.ca/summerwebinar?utm_campaign=c49ae866-0a2e-4aba-8cdf-28c3982dd2b7&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail

Fall: Growing Under Cover - Techniques for a more productive, weather-resistant, pest-free vegetable garden

Date & Time: Wednesday, September 21 at 7:00pm ADT

Details: Join award-winning author Niki Jabbour as she shares her secrets to growing more food, reducing pest problems, and dealing with unpredictable weather in her vegetable garden. She will spotlight a wide variety of season extenders like shade cloth, row covers, cold frames, and polytunnels, as well as show



you how to use garden covers to prevent damage from pests. Put Niki's techniques to work in your garden so you can enjoy a year-round harvest in any sized space.

Registration: Opens 31 July, 2021 for non-members.

Cost: \$20 for non-AMGA members via e-transfer.

Register here:

https://www.atlanticmastergardeners.ca/fallwebinar?utm_campaign=c49ae866-0a2e-4aba-8cdf-28c3982dd2b7&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail

Events on Hold until Further Notice

Stratford Master Gardeners

POSTPONED!! Technical Update

Topic: *Gardening for the Planet: Creating Biodiverse Habitats in Our Gardens*

Information: We had asked you to save the date of October 17th, 2020 for our Technical Update. As a result of COVID-19 we postponed the event rather than leave people uncertain as to whether it would go ahead.

Halton Master Gardeners

Postponed! Technical Update! Stay Tuned!

Topic: *Refugia: the future of gardening*

Original Date: Saturday, October 24th, 2020

Location: Waterdown, ON

Speakers:

- Dr. Christina Davy, Research Scientist with the Ministry of Natural Resources
- Catherine Kavassalis, Halton Region Master Gardener
- Paul Gellatly
- Claudette Sims, Past President MGOI
- Other special guests TBA



Of Possible Interest to Master Gardeners

Haliburton Master Gardeners

by MG Carolyn Langdon

Honeybees

Fact: Honeybees are not native to Canada and they are not wild. Haliburton County is one of the few homes left for wild bees. You may not want to hear this but honeybees can pose a threat to wild bees and now this information has gone mainstream.

<https://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca/news/article/honeybees-can-pose-a-threat-to-wild-bees-heres-how>

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is now!" ~Ancient Chinese proverb



University of Guelph Arboretum

Name: 2021 Virtual Workshops

Details: Guelph Arboretum continues to run on-line courses which may be of interest. Sign up for a series or for an individual session. Further information is available here:

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/educationandevents/workshops>.

Zoom meeting details will be provided after registration.



A Message from the President

Karen Sciuk, President MGOI



It is with pleasure and excitement that the Canadian Garden Council, supported by *Canada's Garden-Family*, is proud to proclaim 2022: Canada's Year of the Garden.

MGOI, as part of Canada's Garden family, is proud to support **Year of the Garden 2022** in principle. Interested groups are encouraged to send letters of support to their local Federal MP (see below). I will also post something on the MGOI Facebook page. The following is an excerpt from their website:

<https://mailchi.mp/31db1d978b80/kvutnht865-13371271?e=116ef0a728>

Update

On May 10, Year of the Garden officials met with the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to table our request for her to be a Champion of the **Year of the Garden 2022** request for official government designation and financial support. Her response to our request was very positive. She accepted to put forth a motion to parliament to recognize 2022 as Canada's Year of the Garden and pointed us toward a few programs for funding.

Government still needs to hear your voice

If you believe that **Year of the Garden 2022** is a good thing for Canadians, if you have not yet done so, please express your support to your Member of Parliament for an official designation of 2022 as Canada's Year of the Garden.

[Contact your Federal MP today!!!](#) We also invite you to share this **Year of the Garden 2022** proclamation with your members and your network. Thank you!

For more information please go to:

<https://gardenscanada.ca/year-of-the-garden/> and www.yearofthegarden.ca.

How can you, a member of Canada's Garden-Family, benefit from the **Year of the Garden 2022**? If you want to benefit, we invite you to engage. It's time to think about how you will celebrate, how will you engage your clients, what will be your special project, how will you engage with the nation-wide **Year of the Garden 2022** marketing and promotional campaign. Are you joining Canada's **Year of the Garden 2022** celebrations?

The **Garden-Family** Resource Guide provides you with ideas, links to various tools and information to help you plan your participation. Check the website for the Resource Guide: www.yearofthegarden.ca

Support Keeps Coming

We keep receiving letters of support. We are happy to share them with you and quotes from them on the website.

